

(b) recommend to the President through the Assistant ways to improve coordination, cooperation, and communication among Federal, State, and local officials and private and other entities, and provide a means to collect scholarly research, technological advice, and information concerning processes and organizational management practices both inside and outside of the Federal Government;

(c) provide advice to the President through the Assistant regarding the feasibility of implementing specific measures to detect, prepare for, prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from terrorist threats or attacks within the United States;

(d) examine, and advise the President through the Assistant on, the effectiveness of the implementation of specific strategies to detect, prepare for, prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from terrorist threats or attacks within the United States; and

(e) report periodically, as appropriate, to the President through the Assistant on matters within the scope of the PHSAC's functions as described in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section.

Sec. 3. Administration. (a) Upon the request of the Chair of the PHSAC, through the Assistant, and to the extent permitted by law, the heads of executive departments and agencies shall provide the PHSAC with such information relating to homeland security matters as the PHSAC may need for the purpose of carrying out its functions.

(b) The PHSAC shall have an Executive Director selected by the Assistant.

(c) Members shall serve without compensation for their work on the PHSAC, the SACs, and any subcommittees thereof. However, members shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by law for persons serving intermittently in Federal Government service (5 U.S.C. 5701–5707).

(d) To the extent permitted by law, and subject to the availability of appropriations, the Office of Administration shall provide the PHSAC with administrative support and with such funds as may be necessary for the performance of the PHSAC's functions.

Sec. 4. General Provisions. (a) Insofar as the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.) (Act), may apply to the administration of any portion of this order, any functions of the President under that Act, except that of reporting to the Congress, shall be performed by the Administrator of General Services in accordance with the guidelines that have been issued by the Administrator.

(b) The PHSAC, any SACs, and any SAC subcommittees shall terminate 2 years from the date of this order unless extended by the President.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 19, 2002.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 12:11 p.m., March 20, 2002]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 21 and published in the *Federal Register* on March 21.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Emergency Appropriations and Allocation of Emergency Response Funds

March 20, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with the requirement included in Public Law 107–63, the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 2002, I hereby request \$346.0 million in emergency appropriations previously provided under title II for the Department of Agriculture for rehabilitation and wildfire suppression activities of the Forest Service.

I hereby designate these funds as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. The entire amount is being designated as an emergency requirement to make \$200.0 million available immediately to repay funds previously borrowed for emergency wildland fire suppression activities.

Furthermore, in accordance with provisions of Public Law 107–38, the Emergency

Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States, FY 2001, I hereby authorize a transfer from the Emergency Response Fund totaling \$27.2 million to the General Services Administration.

I have previously authorized the transfer of over \$19.9 billion in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. With this action today, all the funds that were made available to me from the Emergency Response Fund have been transferred for urgent needs.

The details of these actions are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 21.

Remarks Following a Breakfast Meeting With the Vice President and an Exchange With Reporters

March 21, 2002

The President. Good morning. Thank you all for coming. I just had a breakfast with Vice President Cheney, and as you all know, he's returned from a lengthy and successful trip to the Middle East, the first trip I asked him to go on. I sent him to the region because this is an incredibly important part of the world, and it's a turbulent part of the world. And the Vice President took a lot of messages on behalf of our administration and made some really good progress. I'm really proud of how he handled himself and how he delivered the message.

As a result of this trip, and as a result of working with General Zinni, there is some progress being made in the Middle East. And I want to thank the Vice President for being very firm and deliberate and convincing both parties that the Tenet plan and ultimately the Mitchell plan is a way to achieve what we all want in the world, which is a peaceful resolution to this longstanding conflict.

But Mr. Vice President, welcome back. Thanks, you did a great job.

The Vice President. Well thank you, Mr. President. It was a good trip. And as you say, there are a lot of issues on the agenda right now that are important in that part of the world.

I talked extensively with our friends about the ongoing campaign in Afghanistan and the war against terror that affects all of us. And everybody in the region spent a lot of time on the Israeli peace problems and propositions—the conflict between Israelis and the Palestinians—obviously, a lot of time on the Iraqi situation and Saddam Hussein's development of weapons of mass destruction. But I found at virtually every stop that the United States has great friends and allies in that part of the world. I also had the opportunity to visit with a number of our military personnel conducting active operations or supporting those operations in Afghanistan and the region. So all in all, it was a great trip. I'm ready to go back there.

The President. Questions? Yes, John [John King, CNN].

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, interested in your own calculations when the Vice President called to discuss the possibility of the Arafat meeting, your calculations in making the decision to change slightly the administration's standard for opening the door to a meeting with him. And Mr. Vice President, do you believe now that meeting will happen? Is Mr. Arafat keeping his end of the bargain?

The President. Well, first of all, I've always been one that trusts the judgment of the people I send on a mission. And the Vice President called me, with General Zinni by his side, and said, "There's a chance that we can get into the Tenet security agreement. And if that were to happen, in my judgment, I think it would be best if I would then go see Mr. Arafat."

And I trust the Vice President's judgment. He's a man of enormous experience who's got a good feel for things, and we both trust General Zinni. And so the definition of whether or not he is going to see Mr. Arafat depends upon the feel for our negotiator, General Zinni. But I think it was the right thing to do, obviously.